REPORT on the IEP/EARLY CHILDHOOD OUTCOMES PROCESS SURVEY

About this Report

The VT Agency of Education has partnered with two national technical assistance centers—the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy)—to support high quality child outcomes data for our state. Part of this support has been to adapt the ENHANCE study’s Provider Survey to meet Vermont’s needs, and in particular, to focus on how embedding the child outcomes data collection into the IEP process is being implemented. The resulting data from the adapted ENHANCE Provider Survey have been analyzed and are available in this report. The purpose of this report is to inform the improvement strategies and next steps to address the quality of the IEP process, the child outcomes data collection process, and child outcomes data results.

About the Survey

The ENHANCE research project was designed to improve the quality of child outcomes data by developing an understanding of the implementation of the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process across the nation. The project consisted of a series of four smaller studies that examined the quality of the data being collected through the COS process. One of the studies included the use of a provider survey to gather information from Part C and Part B Section 619 programs in selected study states about the validity of COS data for their state’s early intervention and early childhood special education agencies. Vermont’s Early Childhood Special Education adapted the survey to include questions specific to the implementation of the early childhood outcomes measurement within the IEP process. It was sent to Special Education directors and teachers across the state for voluntary response. Approximately 250 surveys were sent out via email with an electronic link to the survey, and 107 were completed.
Section 1: About Your Training and Experience with the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes

1&2. At present, approximately how many entry and exit IEPs with the Early Childhood Outcomes embedded have you completed? (n=107)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-10</th>
<th>11-30</th>
<th>31-50</th>
<th>&gt; 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of entry IEPs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of exit IEPs</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Have you received information or training about the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes process? (n=107)

- Yes 75%
- No 25%
3.a. What training or information have you received? (n=164)

- I provide training on the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes to others (2)
- Preservice training (3)
- One-on-one training (3)
- Webinar or training conference call (7)
- Other: (please describe) (8)
- Website resources (e.g., ECTA Center or state website) (8)
- Online or video training module (9)
- Ongoing feedback from a supervisor or program director (23)
- In-person local or regional training event (32)
- Review of IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes training materials (58)
- In-person state level training event

4. How many total hours have you spent since 2012 being trained or learning about the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes process? (n=104)

- Maximum Hours Trained
- Minimum Hours Trained
- # of Responses

- None (18)
- <1 hour (13)
- 1-2 hours (20)
- 3-4 hours (16)
- 5-8 hours (22)
- 9-15 hours (11)
- >15 hours (4)
5. On average, how long does it take to identify a child’s early childhood outcome ratings and provide documentation during the IEP meeting? (n=102)

6. Have you ever used the ECO decision tree? (n=104)
Section 2: About Knowledge and Skills Related to the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes Process

8. HOW TRUE are the following statements? "I know how to..." (n=101)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>A Little True</th>
<th>Not at all True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. ...explain the need for the child outcomes ratings to families.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ...discuss the child’s functional skills in the 3 outcome areas with others who know the child.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ...identify how the child uses his/her skills to perform meaningful, everyday tasks.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. ...collect information about the child’s functional skills across settings and situations.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. ...compare the child’s functional skills to age-expectcd functional skills.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ...talk with families about age-expected functional skills.</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. ...identify whether or not the child made any progress in the outcome areas (needed at exit or for follow up discussions).</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3: About Your Experience with the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes Meetings

9. In HOW MANY of your IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes meetings have you experienced the following? (n=91)

- All (100%)
- Most (76-99%)
- Many (51-75%)
- Some (26-50%)
- A few (1-25%)
- None (0)

- The family provided input about the child’s functioning.
- The rating was decided by a team (including the family) that included at least one other professional and me.
- Information about the child’s functioning from multiple settings and situations was used in deciding the ratings.
- I was not involved in deciding the ratings, but I provided input on the child’s functioning.
- At least one other professional in addition to me provided input about the child’s functioning.
- Information from one or more assessment tools was used in deciding the ratings.
- All involved considered information carefully in order to identify an accurate rating.
- There was enough information about the child’s functioning in each outcome to decide on a rating.
- There was enough time to review the child’s functioning in each of the three outcome areas.
- I was confident that the ratings given were accurate.
- The process used for deciding ratings matched my understanding of how it is supposed to be done.
- The ratings were selected to make the program look good.

10. Which of the following assessments do you use to inform the IEP Early Childhood Outcomes ratings? (n=88)

- AEPS
- Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment
- Battelle Developmental Inventory
- Other/Multiple
- TS Gold

11. When does your team determine entry, exit and progress ratings? (n=90)

- We come to the IEP meeting with the ECO ratings selected and share with the family during the meeting
- We determine the ECO ratings in the meetings with the family
- We wait until after the meeting to determine the ECO ratings
12. What proportion of your IEP team understand the following concepts? (n=91)

- The meaning of each of the three outcomes: 7%
- How to apply the criteria for each of the 7 rating points: 12%
- The difference between functional skills and discrete skills: 2%
- Age-expected functional skills in each of the three outcome areas: 3%
- I understand why we are collecting child outcomes data: 4%
- I understand what happens with the child outcomes data that we collect: 11%
- I understand how to use the child outcomes data that we collect: 9%

13. Please rate HOW TRUE the following statements are. (n=85)

- Information from assessment tools we use is very helpful in determining ECO ratings for the three outcomes: 29%
- I receive feedback from someone such as a supervisor on the IEP early childhood outcomes ratings or the IEP form: 10%
- ECO ratings tend to be low at entry relative to the child’s actual level of functioning: 22%
- The IEP with the early childhood outcomes embedded is a good way to collect data on child outcomes: 26%
- Ongoing support at the district level related to the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes summary process is adequate: 5%
- Ongoing support at the state level related to the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes summary process is adequate: 22%
- ECO ratings are more accurate when parents are present for the rating decision: 16%
- It is difficult for individuals involved in identifying ECO ratings to reach consensus on one or more of the three outcomes: 5%
- I receive helpful feedback from district staff about the IEP early childhood outcomes form: 7%
- I receive helpful technical assistance from state staff when needed that helps inform the completion of the IEP or the ECO ratings: 20%
- The Part C/E exit COS rating is used to inform the entry ratings for Part B: 14%
14. Have you ever gone back and looked at previous IEP/ECO entry ratings and thought some of the ratings should have been different? (n=86)

- **YES, I have looked back = 67 (78%)**
- **NO, I haven’t looked back = 19 (22%)**

Section 5: About program/district activities

15.1 Please indicate "yes" or "no" for the following statements. "Currently, someone at our program/district..." (n=87)

- a. ...checks the child outcome portion of the IEP after it is completed to ensure the ECO ratings are accurate. (43%)
- b. ...provides feedback to those who are involved in the IEP and the ECO ratings determination. (25%)
- c. ...is available to provide me with ongoing support if I ask for it. (63%)
- d. ...trains professionals new to the IEP/early childhood outcomes process. (33%)
Section 6: Impact of the IEP/Early Childhood Outcomes Process on Practice/Services

15.2 Please rate HOW TRUE the following statements are. "Embedding the Early Childhood Outcomes into the IEP process..." (n=82)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>A Little True</th>
<th>Not at all True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. ...makes me more aware of children’s functioning relative...</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ...leads to better functional IEP goals, objectives and...</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ...improves the way we work as a team.</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. ...helps me think about children’s functional skills across...</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. ...helps me focus on functional use of skills to perform...</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ...helps me think about children’s progress over time.</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. ...improves the quality of my conversations with families...</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. ...improves the assessment process.</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. ...helps focus discussion on the “whole child.”</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. As a result of embedding the early childhood outcomes in the IEP process, have there been positive effects on your practice or provision of services that are not included in the questions above? (n=82)

Collaboration
Much easier administratively. Far more manageable. Much easier team members’ involvement.
Perhaps mentioned already, but the outcomes have allowed us to look more closely at functional goals and been helpful for related service providers to look at a child’s development through functional skills versus discreet skills.
Helps us to be more transdisciplinary in our work/planning.
I use the outcome areas to look at children at transition time and to make a graphic of where they may need additional support. Each of the outcomes areas--addresses a different type of support.
Focusing on skills in multiple areas (such as communication in Areas A and B rather than just in B).
I have found that is less time consuming and I can focus more on the child.
Team members can take a strength-based approach to discussing young children’s development.
It serves as a constant awareness about the ECO in the IEP goal process and planning curriculum to help the child succeed.
Helps you see your service as part of the whole child.
I gain from the phrase “in order to...” This really put ownership on me, as the EEE/ classroom teacher to truly connect the dots between individual student’s skill development and the activities and assessment opportunities that I build into each day’s lesson plans.
Helping families understand the areas of development more clearly.
Outcomes are tied to meaningful information that stands for something so it isn’t just a one more thing to check off....
I do the ECO’s each year the child is in EEE/ECSE. By visiting the ECO’s yearly reminds me and the team if the child is making progress and most often they do and it keeps my focus on if the goals and objectives are appropriate.
All working with the child can work with different outcomes in many areas.
17. Have there been any challenges or barriers to your practice or provision of services as a result of embedding the early childhood outcomes in the IEP process? (n=73)

*Prevailing sentiments from the free/open response text represent “coding categories” (shown here on the horizontal axis series). A “1” was assigned to every category for which a response was related. Interpolated, nominal data such as this are presented here solely for the purpose of conveying information from a lot of comments (i.e., simplifying this report). Caution is advised when interpreting this data, as presented, since the relative magnitude of the values and their scales are arbitrary. Further, coded values may not accurately reflect the author’s intent. A copy of the actual responses may be made available upon request.
18. Overall, what has been the impact of embedding the early child outcomes into the IEP process on your work with children and families? (n=83)

- Very Positive: 13%
- Positive: 39%
- Neutral: 45%
- Negative: 4%

There were no “Very Negative” responses.

Section 7: About You

19. Which of the following describe your professional role in your program? (n=109)

- Occupational Therapy Assistant: 1%
- Physical Therapist: 2%
- Evaluator: 9%
- Speech-Language Pathologist: 12%
- Other: 13%
- General Education Teacher: 17%
- Early Childhood Special Education teacher: 78%

6 role types had zero respondents: speech-language pathologist assistant, occupational therapist, physical therapy assistant, psychologist, social worker/counselor, nutritionist
21. Have you worked, in any capacity, with children from birth to age five WITHOUT disabilities (e.g., child care, teaching, assessment)? (n=82)

- Yes: 79% (65)
- No: 21% (17)

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20. 21.a. How long have you worked with children from birth to age five WITH (n=82) and WITHOUT (n=65) disabilities?

**Experience Groups**
- < 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- >10 years

**Number of Responses**

- WITH Disabilities
- WITHOUT Disabilities

- Years of Experience
- Worked with children WITH Disabilities
- Worked with children WITHOUT Disabilities
22. Please indicate what type of software you use to develop IEPs. (n=81)

- Other: 4%
- GoalView: 46%
- DocuSped: 51%

2 of 3 "other" software types provided: Infinite Campus, State forms.

"Case-e" had zero responses.
Next steps

The information contained herein will be used to support and hone continued efforts by the VT Agency of Education, DaSy, and ECTA to improve the quality of the IEP process, the child outcomes data collection process, and child progress. Subsequent steps may include:

- developing a mission and vision for data collection;
- developing policies and procedures for the IEP and child outcomes data collection processes;
- developing a professional development plan; and
- reviewing infrastructure and monitoring procedures to develop capacity to continue support the improvement of child outcomes data quality.

Please cite as: